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AUTHOR	Easton, Lois Brown
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ABSTRACT

Several models of the reading and writing processes suggest that the two should be taught together as part of the communication process. The first responsibility of a teacher interested in teaching the connection is the selection of a model that seems to fit perceptions about the connection. Next, the teacher must decide the balance and sequence of instruction. Also helpful are recognition of the commonalities of reading and writing and an understanding of the roles readers and writers play. One specific way teachers can help students see the connection is by clarifying terminology used in reading and writing classes. Teachers also need to realize that since some writing is heavily based on reading the problem of such writing may stem from the reading process, not the writing process. Through direct teaching of the connection, students can be taught overtly as readers to understand the plans and relationships writers use; the use of cohesive ties; visual, verbal, or structural cues; and various kinds of organizers that facilitate reader comprehension. Specific strategies embedded in other instruction include the teaching of syntax or the use of emulation, random formations, sentence combining, self-evaluation and editing, or responses to reading. Other strategies might include the use of miscellaneous units, paragraph phrases, essay frames, cloze tests, and the writing of a class novel, logs and journals, or protocols. Reading aloud to students, sentence prescriptions, and the language experience approach are yet other approaches for teaching the reading and writing connection. (HOD)

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STRENGTHENING THE READER AS WRITER AND THE WRITER AS READER

Lois Brown Easton

Introduction

In some schools reading and writing are taught together, in some schools separately. The rationale for the placement of reading and writing together seems more sensical than that for separating them, yet some elementary schools persist in having reading time and then writing time, and some junior high/middle schools have reading classes separate from writing classes, for reasons as vague as "just to be sure students have time to read/write." Researchers are beginning to suggest that reading and writing as part of the communication process should go together and that, in fact, students will benefit from seeing the relationship. If integration of the subjects cannot be accomplished, however, teachers can structure activities as they teach writing that will strengthen their students as readers and activities as they teach reading that will strengthen their students as writers. The first part of this paper presents models of the reading and writing processes; the second presents attitudes and perceptions that teachers must have to teach the interconnectedness of the two. The final part of this paper presents strategies for teaching towards the connection either overtly or embedded in other instruction.

Models

Traditional Kellogg (1971) and others suggested a hierarchical viewpoint of the relationship between reading and writing. It was Kellogg's point of view that students develop all language through experience. They grow towards language maturity through listening, then speaking, then reading, and finally writing. The last step in Kellogg's model is refinement of both the receptive and expressive forms of language, oral and written.

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Mackintosh (1964) stated that most humans follow the hierarchy of learning language from listening to speaking to reading to writing, and Lerner (1976) suggested that "a firm foundation is required at each level before the next skill level can be effectively added or integrated."

Linguistic Reserach into reading and writing by linguists and psycholinguists suggests that the process is not at all hierarchical. In fact, researchers such as Donald Graves from the University of New Hampshire have shown that students can actually write before they read. The basic linguistic model shows no sequence to the processes, simply a relationship:

	Encoding	Decoding
Oral	Speaking - - - - - - - - - - - -	Listening
Written	Writing- - - - - - - - - - - -	Reading

Psycholinguists suggest that the cue systems they call graphophonic, syntactic and semantic are strategies writers use to encode language just as readers use to decode language.

William D. Page describes the reading and writing connection as follows:

Author	Reader
Knowledge	
/	
Meaning	
/	
Deep Structure	
/	
Conceived Surface Structure	
/	
Graphic Surface Structure > > > >	Graphic Surface Structure
	/

Perceived Surface Structure

/

Deep Structure

/

Meaning

/

Knowledge

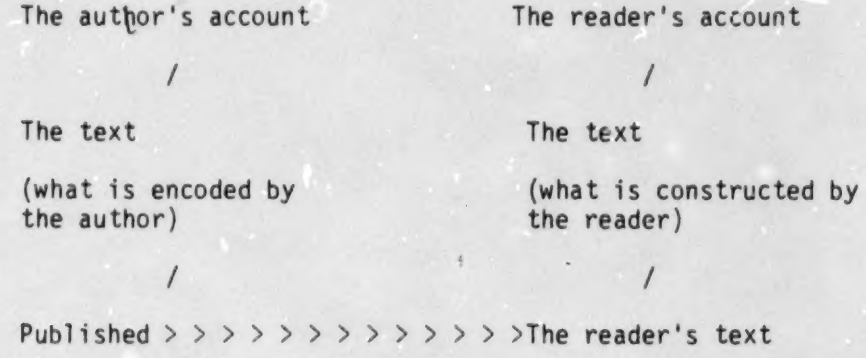
His approach has been called a "bottoms-up" approach because it proceeds in reading from what is on the page to knowledge. Other linguists and psycholinguists have argued from a "top-down" approach that reading occurs from knowledge and that readers sample the text as their knowledge, or lack of it, dictates. Still others come from an integrated approach and see both strategies occurring as needed in all readers.

Reading and writing can also be thought of as producing and processing language. Peterson's model of reading and writing centers on expressive language. He suggests that both processing language (reading and listening) and producing language (writing and speaking) emanate from a person's expressive language; that is, the reader translates the transactional language of a text into expressive language to comprehend it and the writer conceives an idea in expressive language and then encodes it in transactional language so that it can be understood by others.

Walmsley suggested that reading and writing can be thought of within the contexts in which they occur. These contexts are linguistic (the words, the text itself, and the semantic and syntactic operations occurring between the reader/writer and the text), schematic (knowledge of the world), social (time and place of writing/reading, distance between reader and writer, the people around the reader/writer, and the demands of the task), and strategic (purposes, objectives, and goals to be met by reader/writer). The degree to

which these are opaque or transparent between reader and writer is the degree to which the text binding reader and writer will be understood.

Another psycholinguistic model presents the relationship of reading and writing based on text (Gespass):


The author's account
The reader's account
The text
(what is encoded by the author)
The text
(what is constructed by the reader)
Published > > > > > > > > > > > > >The reader's text

From a Writing Model Trosky and Wood suggest a model of the connection between reading and writing from a writing perspective instead of from a reading perspective. Their process of composing (listing, grouping-sorting, naming, internal sequencing, external sequencing, and oral "paragraphing"), transcribing (spelling, punctuation, usage), editing (style, clarity, flow, main ideas, introduction, conclusion) translates into a parallel reading model. Composing becomes for readers recomposition/literal comprehension (listing of details, grouping of details, identifying internal and external sequences, and first impressions/reactions). Transcription becomes reflection (interpretation, identifying techniques used by the writer leading to understanding implied meanings and purpose). Editing becomes reaction (evaluating and applying the reading experience and integrating the author's message into the reader's experience).

The Deprivation Model Some look upon reading and writing in terms of how lack of ability in one affects the other. Loban felt that poor readers were also poor writers. Those who have trouble decoding are probably those whose writing is disorganized and incoherent. Shaughnessy cited the short-term memory problems poor readers and writers have as they try to store information long

enough to decode or encode it.

Attitudes and Perceptions Towards Reading and Writing

The first responsibility of a teacher interested in teaching the connection is selection of a model that seems to fit perceptions about the connection. Adaptation of that model or combination of models may fit better than any one model.

Next, the teacher might decide the balance and sequence of instruction. How much reading? How much writing? When? This is especially crucial in early instruction. Graves, Hoskisson, Sowers, Giacobbe and others suggest that writing could come before or simultaneously with beginning reading instruction. In his NIE study at the University of New Hampshire and nearby schools, Graves investigated first graders reading and writing. His descriptive study followed several children as they learned to be writers and readers. Giacobbe's students, for example, wrote from the first week of first grade. They were encouraged to use invented spelling to write, and they learned to read by reading to the teacher and other students what they had written. Skills, including phonics, came as needed according to their writing. Graves and others suggest that children are ready to write even before they are ready to read.

Also helpful to the teacher desiring to teach towards the connection is recognition of the commonalities of reading and writing. Both proceed from written symbols. Both have a base of thinking/knowledge. Both are learned processes. Both require application of strategies. Both are cognitive and affective at the same time. Both are multi-level and interactive. Both are constructive as they build knoweldge and meaning.

Writing and reading are different, however. Writing proceeds from knowledge, but reading usually proceeds from inference. Understanding and expression may be seen as related in two differing ways. One may understand (read) and not be able to express (write). From the second point of view, one may not fully

understand something until able to express it. The writer needs more information and strategies to write than the reader to read. Writer have more choice and control than readers do over text. Finally, writers can control purpose; readers cannot.

Another perception teachers need is an understanding of the roles readers and writers play. Writers must comprehend what the reader has to do with the text to understand it. Readers must try to understand what the writer is trying to do with the text. Readers must have understanding of themselves as readers and how they will go about interpreting text. Writers must have understanding of their role as producer of text. Thus, comes the big connection between reading and writing, the audience role. The focus here is on the writer's ability to realize text and the reader's ability to interpret it. The writer must be guided by what the reader needs to know. The reader must understand, or try to understand, the decisions the writer made. Vygotsky and others suggest that as audience is considered readers and writers notice the factors of ellipsis, cohesion, coherency, anaphora/cataphora, and chunking of meaning as these aid/hinder text. The focus here is on transactional writing, the relationship of reader to writer and writer to reader.

One specific way teachers can aid students in seeing the connection is by clarifying terminology used in reading and writing classes. Considering such terminology as part of a "family" of terms will help students avoid confusion. "Main idea" and "theme" used in reading, and "thesis" and "topic sentence" used in writing might be presented as descriptions of the same phenomonon. "Connectives" need to be clarified as the same as "transitions," and "foreshadowing" as "prediction." "Completion" and "resolution" may be seen as describing the same point in a narrative. Locating the main noun and the verb that directs it might be helpful both in reading and writing classes as students conceptualize

main idea/theme/thesis.

Finally, the teacher teaching the connection needs to realize that some writing is heavily based on reading and that within the reading process, not the writing process, may lie the writing problems perceived by that teacher. Transcription, copying, dictation, paraphrasing, writing a precis, writing a resume or summary, modelling, summarizing and analyzing may be reading problems first and then writing problems.

Strategies

Direct Teaching of the Connection Students can be taught overtly as readers to understand the plans and relationships writers use; they can be taught as writers how to produce these plans so that readers can understand what they wish to say. Meyer suggests that both readers and writers learn the typical plans used by writers: causation, comparison, description, response (question and answer or problem-solution), and time-order. Trosky lists somewhat different plans: response, adversative (pro and con), attribution (collection), and covariance (cause and effect). According to Trosky, both adversative and covariance plans result in higher reader retention of material.

Cohesive ties are also ways to facilitate reader understanding. Readers who understand pronouns and their antecedents, comparatives, conjunctions, synonyms, and classification words are more likely to grasp the meaning of a text. Thus, writers would do well to use these cohesive ties so that readers can understand what they've written. Repeated content words also tie text together. Halliday and Hasan speak of cohesion when they describe lexical ties (meaning), substitution (synonyms), conjunction, ellipsis (omission), and reference as they influence cohesion.

Readers as they process and writers as they produce text would benefit from consideration of visual, verbal, and structural cues. Visual cues include

graphic layout, paragraphing indention, and punctuation. Verbal cues include previewing material through title and thesis statement and method of organization implied in a first paragraph. Subsequent organization of information through coordinate, subordinate, and superordinate conjunctions and transitions are other verbal cues. Structural cues are familiar writing plans, described above, such as narration, description, collection, cause and effect, comparison and contrast, and response. Readers trained to look for these cues and writers trained to produce them will promote understanding of material.

On both the paragraph and sentence level, the reader and writer should be made aware of various kinds of organizers. Writers need to know that if they put the topic sentence first in a paragraph they will help the reader with an advance organizer. Use of the subject noun phrase first in a sentence also aids readability. Careful consideration of the effect of anaphora and cataphora are other sentence organizers important to both readers and writers. Temporal and presuppositional connectives/transitions are best if explicit in stating idea relationships.

Specific Strategies: Syntax Several teaching techniques can be used with both readers and writers to facilitate language processing and producing through teaching of syntax. Three-Step Expansion is one technique that works. Students are given a base sentence of five words. At each step in the process they add five more words anywhere in the base sentence. They expand the base sentence five words at a time until the sentence cannot bear any more meaning. Bare-Bones Reduction is the opposite process. A "loaded" sentence is stripped away one word or more at a time until it is a base sentence; students soon see that to take away one word they must sometimes take away the words preceding or following it, or the sentence left is nonsensical. Thus, they learn about phrases and clauses.

In Sentence Shift students are given sentences loaded with clauses and

phrases and they experiment with relocation of these within the sentence. Discussion of subtle shifts of meaning, style, and what "sounds best" with each phrase/clause position is important in this activity. Syntax Cards is a game teachers can play with students. A deck of about 100 cards should be prepared for a class of 35 and the class divided into teams of about 5 students each. The cards should contain 50% or more nouns, about 15% verbs, including helping verbs, 10% adjectives, 10% adverbs, and the rest conjunctions, articles, pronouns, and prepositions. Students should be dealt cards until all are out and then in their groups race to put the cards together to make the longest sentence that makes sense. Discussion of sentences that don't make sense or work as sentences is as beneficial as discussion of those that win.

Emulation is a modelling procedure that enhances both reading and writing skills. A joke, proverb, or epigram is placed on the board or overhead and its meaning discussed. Then, structure is discussed, and students are directed to create their own jokes, proverbs, or epigrams following the structure of the model, but with entirely new meaning and none of the words in the original. At first, it might be helpful for each word in the model to have created for it a bank of words that could replace it. Thus, a list might be made of several prepositions that could replace a preposition in the model. Slotting is another technique that helps both readers and writers. A simple sentence such as "The boy _____." is given to students and they are told to fill that slot with as many one-word fillers as they can. Then, they are told to fill it with several two-word fillers then some three-word fillers, and finally some fillers that are at least four words in length. Students see the importance of position in a sentence and the variety of expression the language makes possible.

Random Formations is a technique often used with spelling words, but it can be used with any set of words such as those from a content lesson. A wild

assortment of words turns this activity into a creative challenge. Students put these words, all of them, into a single sentence, paragraph, or story so that what they've created makes sense, even if it is silly or outrageous. Sentence Ghost is a game students enjoy playing. One student starts a sentence by saying the first word in that sentence, with a second word in mind. The next student says a word that could follow the first word, with a third word in mind. The next student says a word that could follow the second word, with a fourth in mind. If a student cannot think of a word to follow the word just named, the person who just named that word must supply the word he/she had thought of. The game ends when no one can think of a word that can be added and still leave a word to come next. The object is to avoid being the one to say the very last word.

Students can have great fun--and learn about syntax, too--examining patterns in children's and adult's literature. Children's literature is full of pattern prose. Think of Dr. Seuss, for example. Try Judith Viorst. Have students examine the patterns in such literature and then try to replicate it with their own content. Sharing such writing with younger children is very rewarding. Once students have become adept at describing and duplicating patterns in children's literature, have them try adult writers' prose, perhaps James, Steinbeck, or Hemingway. Sentence Anagrams is a game both readers and writers can try. Anagrams are simply scrambled sentences, and the task is to put the words in order to make a meaningful sentence. Discussion of shades of meaning and style differences for the various formations of the scrambled sentences would be beneficial.

Research has not verified the benefits of Sentence Combining for readers, but it has shown that sentence combining can help writers produce variety in sentence construction. It would seem that both open combining (as in Strong) and signaled combining (as in Mellon or O'Hare) are beneficial to readers as they tangle with syntax. Sentence Take-Apart, similar to Bare-Bones Reduction and the reverse of sentence combining, is helpful as students strip away parts

of a complex sentence, creating meaningful mini-sentences each time they do so, until only a kernel sentence is left.

Interestingly, condensed syntax is easier to understand than the pared syntax young readers sometimes encounter in basals and texts. Slowed-down, strung-out prose causes readers to hold more in short-term memory as they move from one major idea to another. In "normal" condensed syntax ideas are introduced and related in quick succession to each other. As Shaughnessy has demonstrated, both readers and writers have short-term memory problems; the reader must hold information in short-term memory until subsequent material makes it completely meaningful, and writers must hold thoughts until they can transcribe them. Practice in doing both helps short-term memory become more efficient.

Specific Strategies: Self-Evaluation and Editing The writer can do much to consider the reader in editing and evaluating writing to be shared. The main problem the writer has is distance--it is hard to achieve distance from one's own writing. The writer-self intrudes on the reader-self whenever the writer as editor begins work on his/her own prose. The writer remembers what he/she meant to say, not what is printed. Thus, the writer as reader provides omitted words and letters and never realizes they were omitted. One way to circumvent this problem is through time, waiting until a piece has "cooled" from the ardor of writing to read it as a reader. If that is not possible, writers can have their work read to them by someone else exactly as it was written. A strategy not as effective, but still beneficial, is reading a piece to someone else and trying to read each syllable as it was written, perhaps at a slower-than-normal pace.

The writer who questions the purpose for each major decision is helpful to the reader who must infer purpose. In fact, the writer might comment in the margins about why a paragraph was constructed, almost holding a dialogue with him/herself as a writer: "I wrote this because I wanted to convince my reader to support a

hot lunch program." Helpful questions for a writer to ask include, "What am I trying to say to/show my reader? What do I want my reader to do or think?"

It may be helpful for the writer to analyze the reader. Fillmore describes two types of readers, the Ideal Reader and the Intended Reader. The Ideal Reader is the reader the text requires, that is, the reader having skills or knowledge needed to understand the text. The Intended Reader is the actual reader with certain skills, abilities, and interests. For a text to be successful, these two readers must be identical. Sometimes the text must help the Intended Reader become the Ideal Reader. Fillmore suggests, therefore, a third type of reader, the Learning Reader for whom the entire text has as its purpose teaching something. The writer for the Learning Reader has to build bridges so that the reader can make cerebral leaps across gaps of knowledge between the writer and the reader.

Writers may consider needs of their readers by assessing the readability of their material with readability formulae. The cloze, Fog, or Fry are readability instruments students can use on their own material. More than one subject should try out the material with the cloze. Although readability formulae are not perfect, use of them does heighten a writer's sensitivity to the reader's needs.

Students do not always know how to edit or evaluate their own work. Modelling and doing protocols of editing and evaluation may help. The teacher who models how a writer looks at his/her own writing may help students learn how to read their own writing, and be critical and constructive as they edit and evaluate. Protocols (think alouds) of students editing or evaluating their own work could give a teacher some insight into what students look for and how they examine their writing.

Certainly, real audiences would help student writers be sensitive to their readers' needs. Auction Questions is one technique that works. Students write questions to be bid on and answered by other students. Information about the

questioner is provided, including depth of experience with the topic under question, and the bidder is instructed to answer the question so that the answer is truly helpful to the questioner. The rough draft is responded to by the questioner and then edited and rewritten, perhaps several times, by the writer. Having students write notes to each other as they edit a work is also helpful: "Dear Jim--I really don't understand what you meant in the second line about 'horseshoes' on camels."

Specific Strategies: Responses to Reading Readers as they write may come to understand better what they have read. As an added benefit, they are also producing language themselves. Some writing, as was mentioned earlier, is so much based on reading that its imperfections may stem more from problems in the reading process than problems in the writing process. Forms of writing based on reading include copying; dictation; reproduction, such as the paraphrase, precis, or summary; reactions; and modelling. Reading may also be used to generate original material. Torbe suggests two types of responses to reading, reflective and enactive. Reflective responses include rehearsal (reliving the material, as in a summary), commentary (as if in third person; reactions to a work), and associative anecdotes (pitting the material against real life). Enactive responses include thinking aloud (learning from the material) and enacting consciousness (sorting out deeper meaning).

Writing is part of reading in that readers come to know what they have read as they struggle to express it. One knows something when one can express it.

Specific Strategies: Miscellaneous Units can help the teacher teach writing in reading class and reading in writing class. Such units can be arranged according to genre or theme. For example, a unit on drama would have students reading and writing plays. A unit on courage would have students reading fiction, nonfiction, and poetry and writing about courage. Units such as these provide the models for writing, the focus for both reading and writing, and considerable motivation

for writing and reading. Scholastic Literature units are examples of commercially produced materials that combine reading with writing in a unit format. Some basal textbooks also do so.

Paragraph Frames is a technique for exploring expository styles and techniques used by writers, including use of cohesive ties. Selected words from a passage of prose are kept, perhaps one word per ten (as opposed to the cloze, in which one word in five is usually omitted). These words may be chosen randomly or purposely; that is, only nouns and pronouns may be kept, or just conjunctions or prepositions, or just adjectives. Blanks left for the omitted words should be the same size no matter how many words were omitted. Students should not simply fill in the blanks, however, because they might feel restricted by the size of the blanks. Instead, they should copy the given words on the page and whenever they come to a blank add whatever they would like, single words, phrases, or sentences. Results may be read aloud and discussed, and perhaps compared to the original.

Essay Frames are similar to Paragraph Frames but focus on the standard essay forms such as comparison or cause/effect. These are outlined for the student so that the student learns a formula for answering typical essay questions. The first line is the essay question turned into a statement with an indication of development: What is your favorite recreation? My favorite recreation is skiing because I like to be out-of-doors exercising and having fun. The next lines begin with given transition words to be followed with the writer's own words: One reason I like skiing is that it allows me to be out-of-doors. The final line of the formula provides concluding/summary words to be followed by a restatement of the thesis plus a summary of points. Essay Frames help students as writers respond to essay questions; they also help readers look for predictable patterns of organization used by writers.

The cloze test has already been mentioned as a way for students to check the readability of their writing, but it has other uses. Writing teachers

can emphasize parts of speech, such as adjectives, by omitting all the adjectives from a selection. Students complete the selection with adjectives they choose and then compare their choices to the original. This technique works well with poetry and prose. Another use of the cloze is for study of cohesive elements in prose. All pronouns could be removed so that pronoun reference can be observed. Conjunctions and transitions can be removed so that sequence/relationship is noted. The cloze can also be used as a way to examine style; students can notice the difference some words in place of omitted words make on the meaning and style of a selection.

Writing a class novel is useful both to writers and readers. Although it appears geared more to writing, it actually involves considerable and careful reading. Students work as committees to outline plot, characters, setting, and theme, which they present for class consideration. The class votes on the best story idea, and then develops it as a class so that a plot outline and character sketches are available. Then the novel is written by one student at a time. The current writer must examine previous writing to continue the style and make the characters and action coherent. As each section is completed, it is read aloud and the class decides whether or not it will "do." It is then revised according to the class's decisions, and the next writer gets a chance to write the next section.

Learning logs and journals are helpful to both readers and writers. As students read a novel, they keep learning logs or journals of their reactions. As they learn content in another class, they express what they have learned in their journals; if they can express it, they probably know it. A technique suggested by Berthoff is valuable for older students. She has students keep double-entry notes so that, in effect, they converse with themselves. On one side they list observations, fragments of ideas, images, lists. On the other side they comment on or interpret what they have written. They may plan on the

right side what they would like to do with their left-side images.

A reading unit from a writer's point of view is a way to get writers to focus on what good writers do to please readers. Such a unit has students examine pieces of writing, bad and good, and answer questions about them that force examination of what the author has done. Once their examination process is complete, students make a list of what authors of pieces they admired had done to make the writing admirable. This list, shared with other students, might become the basis of a Qualities of Good Writing list against which student writing could be evaluated. One way to help students talk about what they have read in terms of its qualities is to group selections and force students to rank them individually, and then in groups, and then as a whole class. Students must then defend their selections for each rank with specific references to elements in the selections.

Just as in the late 60s and early 70s schools set aside time for USSR (Uninterrupted Sustained Silent Reading), they might try Can't Stop Writing, a daily 15-minute writing period during which everyone stops to write something.

Writing protocols, as described by Sondra Perl and Linda Flower, among others, are a valuable way to focus on one of the most important elements in the process of writing, reading. Perl and Flower used protocols to understand and describe the thinking process of writers writing. By having writers talk aloud as they wrote--about what they were thinking as they wrote--they observed several activities that are part of getting ideas onto paper, including planning, assessing, editing, commenting, talking, questioning--and reading. Since students don't always realize the benefits of reading while writing, a protocol by the teacher might help them see that the writer who reads what has just been written finds that the next idea comes easier and keeps the flow of the writing going. The teacher can check the extent students read during writing by having students do their own protocols, perhaps into tape recorders.

Conceptualizing sentences as word groups or chunks of meaning might be

helpful to both readers and writers. Learning the cumulative sentence, for example, might enable students to write more interesting prose and to read such sentences easier. The cumulative sentence, consisting of layers of description in the middle of the sentence (My sister, fat and ugly, walked. . .) or at the end (She walked in the door of the brown and white house near the corner of the street named after my grandfather.) is a frequently-used construction in the English language. Students producing and processing such sentences are going to be better users of the language. Teaching oral interpretation techniques is one way to help students group or chunk words together for meaning.

Reading aloud to students is another technique that is helpful for both readers and writers. Hearing good literature helps students get a feeling for the patterns and rhythms of language not found in basals, texts, or casual language. Vocabulary increases, and students begin to discriminate shades of meaning through tone of voice. Sentence punctuation becomes a "heard" as well as a "seen" phenomenon, and students sense the structure of sentences and paragraphs as well as longer organizational patterns. As importantly, reading aloud motivates student to read and write more themselves.

Sentence prescriptions is a technique for use with older students. Students read an essay and then, in their own words, reproduce the content of that essay. A variation of that technique has students list the purposes of each sentence in an essay and then in their own words and on their own topic repeat the purposes of the original. To simplify matters, the main purposes of sentences in an essay might be listed: generalization, summary, comparison, contrast, cause-effect, opinion, definition, procedure, problem-solution, simile, metaphor, law/principle, example/listing, and transition. These could be given numbers and a formula derived from an essay students read for an essay they are to write: 1-11-6-4-5, for example. Students would thus write a 1-11-6-4-5 essay themselves.

A final technique for strengthening the reader as writer and the writer as

reader is the language experience approach. Well known as a way to help children learn to read, it can also be used to help them begin to write. What is not so well known is how language experience can be used with older students. McWilliams and Smith suggest that decision stories with older students serve the same purpose as language experience stories for younger students. Students discuss prepared stories about peers with problems. They write focus questions to help them arrive at solutions to the problems. They discuss these and write group endings to the stories. Eventually, they create the problem stories themselves, as well as the endings, and work on these individually as well as in groups.

Conclusion

Thus, the connections between reading and writing can be enhanced and students helped to see the communication process from both sides. Both reading and writing can begin that most logical migration of subject matter across the curriculum--reading into writing instruction and writing into reading instruction. Perhaps this first step across the curriculum will pave the way for eventual reading and writing instruction in all curriculum areas. What is learning, after all, if not communication?

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